



SQUAMISH VALLEY MUSIC FESTIVAL

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New Westminster gets first, woody installation of three planned public artworks

by Janet Smith on May 29th, 2015 at 8:05 AM

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Hugo França in Vancouver



HUGO FRANÇA, BRAZIL
VANCOUVER BIENNALE



02:00

HD

Is it a piece of art? A piece of driftwood? Or a piece of furniture? Well all three, as it turns out.

The Vancouver Biennale has expanded into New Westminster, and today, it unveiled the first of three public artworks—Hugo França's *Public Furniture/Urban Trees* along the Waterfront Esplanade in New Westminster's happening Quayside 'hood.

The work, which includes four pieces at Spanish Banks (seen being carved there last year in this video), repurposes fallen logs and driftwood from native trees in British Columbia into sculpture and furniture for the public.

França and wood go back a long way. He quit his job at a São Paulo computer company in 1980 to live and work in the forests of Northeast Bahia, where he spent the next 15 years learning generations-old woodworking techniques from the indigenous tribe of the Pataxó. França was working with salvaged wood from the burnt remains of deforestation.

This project was the first time he has worked with Canadian tree species, including the red cedar, maple and Douglas fir.

The sculpture highlights the role of lumber resources to the economy and is a nod to New Westminster and other cities that thrive along the banks of the Fraser River.

The other two works the biennale is planning to install in New West is Blue Trees by Konstantin Dimopolous by Columbi Street and city hall and WOW New Westminster by Jose Resende at Westminster Pier Park.

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